

In the claims:

1-28. (Canceled)

29. (Previously presented) A bridge unit, comprising:

A first interface for connecting to a connection-oriented switched telephony (COST) network;

a second interface for connecting to a data network for data network telephony (DNT) calls;

a protocol converter for converting calls between DNT and COST network protocols; and

a processor for managing operations of the bridge unit;

wherein the processor receives a first call from one of the COST or DNT networks, causing the processor to place a call automatically associated with the received call on the other network, and to couple said calls by converting the protocols between the networks.

30. (Previously presented) The bridge unit of claim 29 wherein the COST network is a publicly switched telephony (PSTN) network.

31. (Previously presented) The bridge unit of claim 29 wherein the data network is the Internet, and the DNT calls are Internet Protocol Network Telephony (IPNT) calls or voice over Internet protocol (VoIP) calls.

32. (Previously presented) The bridge unit of claim 29 further comprising a digitally-stored look-up table relating COST telephone numbers to IP addresses, and wherein the processor is adapted to retrieve specific data from an incoming call, either COST or DNT, and to use the retrieved data to access the look-up table to determine an associated COST

telephone number or IP address, and to use the associated COST telephone number or IP address to place a call associated with the incoming call.

33. (Previously presented) The bridge unit of claim 32 wherein the specific data from the incoming call is coded in a portion of an IP address associated with the incoming call.

34. (Previously presented) The bridge unit of claim 29 wherein the processor is adapted to receive a DNT call from a caller and to negotiate with the caller to ascertain a COST telephone number to use to place a COST call associated with the incoming DNT call.

35. (Previously presented) The bridge unit of claim 34 wherein the bridge unit further comprises an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) unit, and wherein the IVR unit interacts with the caller to ascertain a COST telephone number for a call to be associated with the incoming DNT call.

36. (Previously presented) A method for interfacing telephony transactions in different protocols, comprising:

- (a) receiving a first call for a specific destination from one of a connection-oriented switched telephony (COST) or a data network telephony (DNT) network at a bridge unit having a first interface for connecting to the COST network and a second interface for connecting to the DNT network;
- (b) automatically associating the destination for the first call with a destination for a second call to be placed on the other of the COST or DNT networks; and
- (c) placing the second call; and
- (d) coupling the two calls by converting the protocols between the networks.

37. (Previously presented) The method of claim 36 wherein the COST network is a publicly switched telephony (PSTN) network.

38. (Previously presented) The method of claim 36 wherein the data network is the Internet, and the DNT calls are Internet Protocol Network Telephony (IPNT) calls or voice over Internet protocol (VoIP) calls.

39. (Previously presented) The method of claim 36 further comprising a digitally-stored look-up table relating COST telephone numbers to IP addresses, and wherein the processor is adapted to retrieve specific data from an incoming call, either COST or DNT, and to use the retrieved data to access the look-up table to determine an associated COST telephone number or IP address, and to use the associated COST telephone number or IP address to place a call associated with the incoming call.

40. (Previously presented) The method of claim 39 wherein the specific data from the incoming call is coded in a portion of an IP address associated with the incoming call.

41. (Previously presented) The method of claim 36 wherein the processor is adapted to receive a DNT call from a caller and to negotiate with the caller to ascertain a COST telephone number to use to place a COST call associated with the incoming DNT call.

42. (Previously presented) The method of claim 41 wherein the bridge unit further comprises an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) unit, and wherein the IVR unit interacts with the caller to ascertain a COST telephone number for a call to be associated with the incoming DNT call.

43. (Previously presented) A bridge unit, comprising:

- A first interface for connecting to a connection-oriented switched telephony (COST) network;
- a second interface for connecting to a data network telephony (DNT) network;
- a protocol converter for converting calls between DNT and COST network protocols; and

a processor including routing software for managing operations of the bridge unit; wherein the processor receives a first call from one of the COST or DNT networks, causing the processor to route the received call automatically on the other network.

44. (Previously presented) The bridge unit of claim 43 wherein the COST network is a publicly switched telephony (PSTN) network.

45. (Previously presented) The bridge unit of claim 43 wherein the data network is the Internet, and the DNT calls are Internet Protocol Network Telephony (IPNT) calls or voice over Internet protocol (VoIP) calls.

46. (Previously presented) The bridge unit of claim 43 further comprising a digitally-stored look-up table relating COST telephone numbers to IP addresses, and wherein the processor is adapted to retrieve specific data from an incoming call, either COST or DNT, and to use the retrieved data to access the look-up table to determine an associated COST telephone number or IP address, and to use the associated COST telephone number or IP address to place a call associated with the incoming call.

47. (Previously presented) The bridge unit of claim 46 wherein the specific data from the incoming call is coded in a portion of an IP address associated with the incoming call.

48. (Previously presented) The bridge unit of claim 43 wherein the processor is adapted to receive a DNT call from a caller and to negotiate with the caller to ascertain a COST telephone number to use to place a COST call associated with the incoming DNT call.

49. (Previously presented) The bridge unit of claim 48 wherein the bridge unit further comprises an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) unit, and wherein the IVR unit interacts with the caller to ascertain a COST telephone number for a call to be associated with the

incoming DNT call.

50. (Previously presented) A method for interfacing telephony transactions in different protocols, comprising:

- (a) receiving a first call for a specific destination from one of a connection-oriented switched telephony (COST) or a data network telephony (DNT) network at a bridge unit having a first interface for connecting to the COST network and a second interface for connecting to the DNT network;
- (b) using a processor including routing software, routing the call on the network other than the network from which the call was received; and
- (c) maintaining the completed connections by converting protocols between the two networks.

51. (Previously presented) The method of claim 49 wherein the COST network is a publicly switched telephony (PSTN) network.

52. (Previously presented) The method of claim 49 wherein the data network is the Internet, and the DNT calls are Internet Protocol Network Telephony (IPNT) calls or voice over Internet protocol (VoIP) calls.

53. (Previously presented) The method of claim 49 further comprising a digitally-stored look-up table relating COST telephone numbers to IP addresses, and wherein the processor is adapted to retrieve specific data from an incoming call, either COST or DNT, and to use the retrieved data to access the look-up table to determine an associated COST telephone number or IP address, and to use the associated COST telephone number or IP address to place a call associated with the incoming call.

54. (Previously presented) The method of claim 53 wherein the specific data from the incoming call is coded in a portion of an IP address associated with the incoming call.

55. (Previously presented) The method of claim 49 wherein the processor is adapted to receive a DNT call from a caller and to negotiate with the caller to ascertain a COST telephone number to use to place a COST call associated with the incoming DNT call.

56. (Previously presented) The method of claim 55 wherein the bridge unit further comprises an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) unit, and wherein the IVR unit interacts with the caller to ascertain a COST telephone number for a call to be associated with the incoming DNT call.

57. (New) A telephony system, comprising:

- A first interface for connecting to a connection-oriented switched telephony (COST) network;
- a second interface for connecting to a data network for data network telephony (DNT) calls;
- a protocol converter for converting calls between DNT and COST network protocols; and
- a processor for managing operations of the system;

wherein the processor receives a first call from one of the COST or DNT networks, causing the processor to place a call automatically associated with the received call on the other network, and to couple the calls by converting the protocols between the networks.

58. (New) A telephony system, comprising:

- A first interface for connecting to a connection-oriented switched telephony (COST) network;
- a second interface for connecting to a data network telephony (DNT) network;
- a protocol converter for converting calls between DNT and COST network protocols; and

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a processor including routing software for managing operations of the system;
wherein the processor receives a first call from one of the COST or DNT
networks, causing the processor to route the received call automatically on the other
network.